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(c) *Secretarial action.* Upon granting any petition for review, the Secretary or designee, may require further briefs. Secretarial review shall be limited to the factual record produced before the hearing officer. The Secretary, or designee, shall issue a written determination and shall serve it upon the parties and the hearing officer.

§ 26.26 Interlocutory rulings.

(a) *Interlocutory rulings by the hearing officer.* A party seeking review of an interlocutory ruling shall file a motion with the hearing officer within ten days of the ruling requesting certification of the ruling for review by the Secretary. Certification may be granted if the hearing officer believes that (1) it involves an important issue of law or policy as to which there is substantial ground for difference of opinion and (2) an immediate appeal from the order may materially advance the ultimate termination of the litigation.

(b) *Petition for review.* Any party may file a petition for review of an interlocutory ruling within ten days of the hearing officer's determination regarding certification.

(c) *Secretarial review.* The Secretary, or designee, shall review a certified ruling. The Secretary, or designee, has the discretion to grant or deny a petition for review from an uncertified ruling.

(d) *Continuation of hearing.* Unless otherwise ordered by the hearing officer or the Secretary, or designee, the hearing shall proceed pending the determination of any interlocutory appeal and the order or ruling of the hearing officer shall be effective pending review.

Subpart B—Hearings Pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act

SOURCE: 61 FR 50210, Sept. 24, 1996, unless otherwise noted.

GENERAL

§ 26.27 Purpose and scope.

Unless otherwise specified in this title, the rules in this subpart B of this part apply to hearings that HUD is required by statute to conduct pursuant

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to the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 554 *et seq.*).

§ 26.28 Definitions.

The following definitions apply to subpart B of this part:

Chief Docket Clerk means the Chief Docket Clerk of the Office of Administrative Law Judges at the following address: 409 3rd Street, S.W., Suite 320, Washington, DC 20024.

Complaint means the notice from HUD alleging violations of a HUD statute and/or regulation, citing the legal authority upon which it is issued, stating the relief HUD seeks, and informing a respondent of his or her right to submit a response to a designated office and to request an opportunity for a hearing before an administrative law judge.

Response means the written response to a complaint, admitting or denying the allegations in the complaint and setting forth any affirmative defense and/or any mitigating factors or extenuating circumstances. The response shall be submitted to the Office of General Counsel that initiates the complaint or to such other office as may be designated in the complaint. A response is deemed a request for a hearing.

§ 26.29 Powers and duties of the Administrative Law Judge (ALJ).

The ALJ shall conduct a fair and impartial hearing, avoid delay, maintain order, and ensure that a record of the proceeding is made. The ALJ is authorized to:

(a) Set and change the date, time, and place of the hearing upon reasonable notice to the parties;

(b) Continue or recess the hearing in whole or in part for a reasonable period of time;

(c) Hold conferences to identify or simplify the issues, or to consider other matters that may aid in the expeditious disposition of the proceeding;

(d) Administer oaths and affirmations;

(e) Issue subpoenas requiring the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents at depositions or at hearings;

(f) Rule on motions and other procedural matters;

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(g) Regulate the scope and timing of discovery;

(h) Regulate the course of the hearing and the conduct of representatives and parties;

(i) Examine witnesses;

(j) Receive, rule on, exclude, or limit evidence;

(k) Upon motion of a party, take official notice of facts;

(l) Upon motion of a party, decide cases, in whole or in part, by summary judgment where there is no disputed issue of material fact;

(m) Conduct any conference, argument, or hearing on motions in person or by telephone; and

(n) Exercise such other authority as is necessary to carry out the responsibilities of the ALJ under subpart B of this part.

§ 26.30 Ex parte contacts.

No party or person (except employees of the ALJ's office) shall communicate in any way with the ALJ on any matter at issue in a case, unless on notice and opportunity for all parties to participate. This provision does not prohibit a person or party from inquiring about the status of a case or asking routine questions concerning administrative functions or procedures.

§ 26.31 Disqualification of ALJ.

(a) An ALJ in a particular case may disqualify himself or herself.

(b) A party may file with the ALJ a motion for the ALJ's disqualification. The motion shall be accompanied by an affidavit alleging the grounds for disqualification.

(c) Upon the filing of a motion and affidavit, the ALJ shall proceed no further in the case until the matter of disqualification is resolved.

§ 26.32 Parties to the hearing.

(a) *General.* The parties to the hearing shall be the respondent and HUD.

(b) *Rights of parties.* Except as otherwise limited by subpart B of this part, all parties may:

(1) Be accompanied, represented, and advised by a representative;

(2) Participate in any conference held by the ALJ;

(3) Conduct discovery;

(4) Agree to stipulations of fact or law, which shall be made part of the record;

(5) Present evidence relevant to the issues at the hearing;

(6) Present and cross-examine witnesses;

(7) Present oral arguments at the hearing as permitted by the ALJ; and

(8) Submit written briefs and proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law after the hearing, as permitted by the ALJ.

§ 26.33 Separation of functions.

No officer, employee, or agent of the Federal Government engaged in the performance of investigative, conciliatory, or prosecutorial functions in connection with the proceeding shall, in that proceeding or any factually related proceeding under subpart B of this part, participate or advise in the decision of the administrative law judge, except as a witness or counsel during the proceeding, or in its appellate review.

§ 26.34 Time computations.

(a) In computing any period of time under subpart B of this part, the time period begins the day following the act, event, or default, and includes the last day of the period, unless the last day is a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday observed by the Federal Government, in which case the time period includes the next business day. When the prescribed time period is seven days or less, intermediate Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays shall be excluded from the computation.

(b) *Entry of orders.* In computing any time period involving the date of the issuance of an order or decision by an administrative law judge, the date of issuance is the date the order or decision is served by the Chief Docket Clerk.

(c) *Service by mail.* If a document is served by mail, 3 days shall be added to the time permitted for a response.

§ 26.35 Service and filing.

(a) *Filing.* All documents shall be filed with the Chief Docket Clerk, at the address listed in § 26.28. Filing may be by first class mail, delivery, facsimile transmission, or electronic